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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SAA-01
SES-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSM-03 NSCE-00 SSO-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2927
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR EG IS US XF
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PRESS ON ISRAELI PREPARATIONS FOR
- CAMP DAVID

SUMMARY: PICKING UP ON BEGIN'SRECENT STATEMENTS THAT U.S. SHOULD PLAY MEDIATORY RATHER THAN PARTNERSHIP ROLE, EGYPTIAN PRESS CLAIMS THAT DIFFERENCES ARE GROWING BETWEEN ISRAEL AND U.S. EDITORIALS COMMENT THAT BEGIN'S CALL FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT, WITH U.S. PLAYING HONEST BROKER ROLE, WOULD BE UNDERSTANDABLE HAD ISRAEL NOT LET SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES SLIP THROUGH ITS
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HANDS. WITH EXCEPTION OF OCCASIONAL PERSONAL CRITICISM OF BEGIN IN ENGLISH GAZETTE, PRESS CONTINUES TO TREAT PRE-CAMP DAVID ACTIVITIES IN MODERATE TONE. AMERICAN NEWSMEN TELL US THEIR EGYPTIAN COLLEAGUES ARE CHAFING UNDER CURRENT RESTRICTIONS AND BELIEVE WRAPS MAY BE TAKEN OFF IF ISRAELIS RAISE DECIBEL LEVEL FURTHER. END SUMMARY.

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1. GUMHURIYYA AUGUST 22 CARRIES BANNER HEADLINES PRO-
CLAIMING THAT DIFFERENCES ARE INTENSIFYING BETWEEN BEGIN
AND CARTER. PICKING UP ON BEGIN'S NEWSWEEK INTERVIEW,
ARTICLE REPORTS THAT BEGIN HAS ASKED CARTER TO ABANDON HIS
ROLE AS PARTNER AND LIMIT HIS ACTIVITIES TO THOSE OF HONEST
MEDIATOR. EDITORIALS ARGUE THAT THIS ATTITUDE IGNORES PRE-
SENT REALITIES; BEGIN HAD HIS CHANCE TO ENGAGE IN DIRECT
NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT AFTER SADAT'S PEACE INITIATIVE, BUT
LET THIS AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES SLIP THROUGH HIS HANDS.

2. AHRAM PLAYS UP STORIES FROM JERUSALEM THAT BEGIN IS
EXPECTED TO CARRY A LARGE NUMBER OF ALTERNATIVES TO
DISCUSS AT CAMP DAVID AND WILL HAVE HIS OWN FORMULA FOR
A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. STORY ALSO REFLECTS ISRAE-
LI PRESS SPECULATION THAT BEGIN MIGHT PROPOSE WITH-
DRAWAL WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD FROM A LINE RUNNING FROM
EL ARISH TO RAS MOHAMAD IN RETURN FOR RETENTION OF
CIVILIAN AND MILITARY PRESENCE AT SOME POINTS IN SINAI,
SPECIFICALLY RAFAH AND AREAS NEAR SHARM AL SHEIKH AND
EILAT.PRESS SAYS THAT BEGIN'S STATEMENTS ABOUT A PARTIAL
AGREEMENT DEMONSTRATE HE HAS NOT CHANGED HIS STAND,
THOUGH HE KNOWS EGYPT HAS ALREADY REJECTED ANYTHING LESS
THAN A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT. AKHBAR SAYS WHAT HAPPENS
AT CAMP DAVID DEPENDS ON ISRAEL'S WILLINGNESS TO RESPOND
TO CALL FOR PEACE, SAYING IT IS CLEAR SO FAR THAT BEGIN
IS FAR AWAY FROM SUCH RESPONSE.
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3. ALL PAPERS GIVE FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE TO ATTACK BY
ISRAELI PLANES ON REFUGEE CAMP IN BEIRUT. THE ENGLISH-
LANGUAGE GAZETTE HAS EDITORIAL WHICH, WHILE NOT
DEFENDING PALESTINIAN TERROR GROUPS, ALSO CRITICIZES
WHAT PAPER REGARDS AS DISPROPORTIONATE ISRAELI REACTION.
BEGIN IS DESCRIBED AS "PROTOTERRORIST", WHOSE FAME IS
FOUNDED ON MASSACRES.

4. COMMENT: WITH EXCEPTION OF OCCASIONAL PERSONAL
ATTACKS ON BEGIN BY LITTLE-READ ENGLISH-LANGUAGE GAZETTE,
CAIRO PRESS CONTINUES TO TREAT CAMP DAVID-RELATED STORIES
IN MODERATE TONE. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN A NOTABLE ABSENCE
OF ANTI-ISRAELI RHETORIC IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY EGYPTIAN
OFFICIALS, FROM SADAT ON DOWN. NEWSMEN TELL US THAT
MANY OF THEIR CONTACTS ARE CHAFING UNDER THE PRE-SUMMIT
RESTRICTIONS. THESE CONTACTS SAY THAT IF BEGIN OR HIS
TOP ADVISORS PUSH MATTERS MUCH FURTHER, THEY BELIEVE THE
WRAPS WILL BE OFF. EILTS

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